THE MASSACHUSETTS RIGHT TO READ EFFORT

YEAR 5

EVALUATION

1977 – 1978

VAZQUEZ, NUTTALL ASSOCIATES, INC.

YEAR FIVE EVALUATION REPORT

THE MASSACHUSETTS RIGHT TO READ EFFORT

1977-78

Submitted to

Dr. Joseph J. Tremont, Director
The Massachusetts Right to Read Effort
State Department of Education
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Submitted by

Ronald L. Nuttal, Ph.D.

Virginia G. Crocker, M.Ed.

John E. Wilson, M.S.

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Vázquez, Nuttall Associates was contracted to evaluate the Massachusetts

Right to Read Effort during the 1977-78 year. The evaluation this year is

focused on what the impact of the Right to Read Effort has had on school

systems through the Right to Read Directors who have been trained. These

training programs, such as Right to Read, operate on the assumption that

trained local Right to Read Directors could reorganize and upgrade the

reading program in their local school system. It is this assumption which

Vázquez, Nuttall has been attempting to evaluate this year.

Each Right to Read Director has been trained to accomplish five initial

activities. These five activities were as follows.

A.   Conduct a local needs assessment on reading issues.

B.   Form a Task Force of professionals.

C.   Create a local Advisory Council for parents and citizens.

D.   Prepare a program of local staff development based on the results
     of the needs assessment.

E.   Implement a local staff development program.

As part of our evaluation we attempted to measure the extent to which

these five activities were accomplished by each local Right to Read Director.

The extent of accomplishment was then contrasted by the number of years

the Director has been in the Right to Read program and by the type of town

or city involved.

Our general methodology has included a mailed questionnaire to local

Right to Read Directors and to other staff people involved in the local

program, interviewing of a subsample of Right to Read Directors, and

attending a Right to Read conference in May. This report will analyze

the survey results, summarize the interviews, and make recommendations based

on the data.

Each local school system is in a different stage of their Right to Read process. However, we were able to discover some general themes. The major theme found was that Right to Read was successful in increasing the awareness of reading within a school system and was successful in increasing the commitment of the school system to reading.

R E S U L T S   O F   M A I L E D   S U R V.E Y

During March, an initial and follow up mailing to 71 Right to Read Directors was conducted. Some 59 completed questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 83 percent. The survey instrument is in the Appendix to this report.

Of the 59 returned questionnaires, 17 percent had been involved in the Right to Read program for one year, 19 percent for two years, and 64 percent for three years or more.

In this section of the report we will report the responses of the total group to each major question and the responses of the subgroups of one year, two years, or three or more years involvement with Right to Read.

Table 1

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Years in the Program Who

Conducted a Local Needs Assessment of Reading Issues

| Years in Program | N | | Percent | |
		YES	NO	NO ANSWER
One Year	10	100	0	0
Two Years	11	100	0	0
Three or More Years	38	100	0	0
Total	59	100	0	0

As indicated in Table 1, all of the Right to Read Directors who responded said that they had conducted a needs assessment of reading related needs. The next step, creation of a local Task Force of professionals, was done by at least 98 percent of the Directors. Only one of the 59 respondents did not answer YES to this question, and that person indicated NO ANSWER.

Table 2

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Years in the Program Who
Established a Local Task Force of Professionals

Year in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	100	0	0
Two Years	11	100	0	0
Three or More	38	97	0	3
Total	59	98	0	2

The establishment of a local advisory council made up of parents and citizens did not meet with as much success as with the two previous activities. Over half of the Directors (58 percent) indicated that the advisory council was created while some 41 percent indicated that it had not been created. It is unclear from these results whether the Right to Read Director had never attempted to set up an advisory council, or whether the attempt to set up such a council was unsuccessful. There seems to be a time trend in the data, in that Right to Read Directors with more years experience in the program were more likely to have set up such a council. Only about six out of ten Directors who had been in the program for three or more years had set up such a citizens advisory council.

Table 3

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Years in the Program Who

Established a Local Citizens Advisory Council

Year in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	40	50	10
Two Years	11	64	36	0
Three or More Years	38	61	39	0
Total	59	58	41	1

The preparation of a plan for staff development was reported by 71 percent of the Directors, 20 percent did not set up such a plan and 8 percent did not respond to the question. In general, those Directors who had been with the Right to Read program longer were more likely to have set up such a plan. Only one half of the first year Directors had a staff development plan.

Table 4

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Years in the Program Who

Set up a Local Plan for the Development of Staff

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	50	40	10
Two Years	11	73	27	0
Three or More Years	38	76	13	11
Total	59	71	20	9

The last step of the progression was the actual conduction of a local Right to Read staff development program. Table 5 gives these results.

Table 5

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Years in the Program Who

Conducted a Local Staff Development Program in Reading

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	60	30	10
Two Years	11	36	55	9
Three or More Years	38	82	10	8
Total	59	69	22	9

For the actual conducting of a staff development program, there was no consistent trend, with some six out of ten of the one-year Directors doing so and eight out of ten of the three or more year Directors having conducted such a program. On the other hand, less than four out of ten of the two-year Directors had conducted such a program.

The results in Tables 4 and 5 taken together indicated that some Right to Read Directors had conducted staff development programs, even though they had not planned such a staff development program. They just conducted such a program without having a formal plan for doing so.

Summary of Local Implementation Steps

We can now summarize the results for the entire group of Right to Read Directors for all five steps of the local implementation of the Right to Read program. Table 6 presents this data.

Table 6

Percent of Right to Read Directors Who Implemented the Five Steps of the Local Right to Read Program

Step	Percent YES
1. Needs Assessment	100
2. Local Task Force of Professionals	98
3. Local Citizens Advisory Council	58
4. Local Staff Development Plan	71
5. Conducted Local Staff Development	69

Clearly the most difficult step, was step 3, the establishment of a local citizens advisory council. While there was essentially complete implementation of the first two steps, and about seven out of ten were able to plan and conduct a local staff development program, only about six out of ten were able to establish a local citizens advisory council.

In our interviews, we discussed this issue with several of the Right to Read Directors. The problem seems to be that local school personnel, not just the Right to Read Directors, but also their superiors, are rather reluctant to have non-educators getting involved in educational decision-making. There remains a considerable amount of trepidation about involving parents and citizens in school issues.

Beyond the five implementation steps, we asked each Right to Read Director if they had conducted other Right to Read activities. Some 58 percent indicated that they had.   See Table 7 for the breakdown by years in the program.

Table 7

Percent of the Right to Read Directors by Years in the Program Who
Conducted Other Right to Read Activities

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	30	0	70
Two Years	11	37	0	63
Three or More Years	38	71	3	26
Total	59	57	2	41

Many particular activities were mentioned. The most frequently mentioned activities were:

- o   Development of a reading curriculum
- o   In-service courses for teachers
- o   Training of reading volunteers
- o   Workshops for parents

Goals and Objectives

We then asked the Directors if their system had established local Right to Read goals and objectives and if they had, what were some of these goals.

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Table 8

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Who

Established Local Right to Read Goals and Objectives

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	90	10	0
Two Years	11	81	19	0
Three or More Years	38	97	3	0
Total	59	93	7	0

Almost all of the Right to Read Directors had set some local goals or objectives. Only among the two-year Directors was there some fall-off and even there some eight out of ten had set goals and objectives for their local programs.

Among the most popular goals set were the following.

- o To improve reading in the content areas (14 Directors)
- o In-Service programs for teachers (9)
- o To establish a volunteer reading program (5)
- o To improve staff development (5)
- o To improve K - 12 communication (5)
- o To record the continuous progress of students (4)

In-Service Teacher Training

When asked if the local school system provided in-service training related to Right to Read issues, some 78 percent of the Directers said YES. There was a steady progression, with those Directors who had been in the program the longest, more likely to report the existence of local in-service training. Table 9 gives the breakdown by year in the program.

Table 9

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Who

Reported Local Right to Read Inservice Programs

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	60	40	0
Two Years	11	64	36	0
Three or More Years	38	87	5	8
Total	59	78	17	5

The Directors were asked how successful they felt that these in-service programs had been. For the entire group, some 22 percent felt that they had been only "somewhat successful", 34 percent "fairly successful", and 27 percent "very successful". In general, the felt successfulness of the inservice programs increased with the length of time the Director had been in the Right to Read program, with three times as many of the three or more year Directors (32%) saying their programs had been "very successful" than did the first year Directors (10%). Table 10 gives this data.

Table 10

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Who

Felt their In-Service Programs to be Successful

Years in Program	N	PERCENT Not at all Successful	Somewhat Successful	Fairly Successful	Very Successful	No Answer
One Year	10	0	40	30	10	20
Two Years	11	0	18	18	27	36
Three or More Years	38	0	18	39	32	11
Total	59	0	22	34	27	17

Were Teacher Workshops Assessed?

Slightly over half (58%) of the individuals indicated that the teacher workshops were assessed. (The predominant method for evaluating workshops were questionnaires and written evaluations.) The groups involved longer in Right to Read were more apt to have their teacher workshops assessed.

Table 11

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	40	30	30
Two Years	11	55	9	36
Three Years or More	38	63	29	11
Total	59	58	25	17

Reading Needs Assessed?

When asked if reading needs were also assessed in the classroom, almost two thirds (64%) of the individuals stated yes. Among the three groups there were large discrepancies. In the group that had been involved with Right to Read one year, 50% of the respondents indicated yes. In the two year group, only 36% stated yes, while the three years or more group had 76% of the respondents who assessed reading needs in the classroom.

Table 12

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	50	40	10
Two Years	11	36	64	0
Three Years or More	38	76	16	5
Total	59	64	29	5

Are the Students Reading Better?

One of the major goals of the Right to Read program was to increase the reading ability of students. When the local Right to Read Directors were asked directly if the students in their school system were reading better because of Right to Read, about four in ten said YES, about two in ten said NO, and about four in ten had NO ANSWER. Thus, less than a majority of the Right to Read Directors at the local level (41%) felt that students in their system were reading better because of Right to Read. However the general impression was that there was a trend toward improvement in reading of the students, even though many of the local Right to Read Directors qualified their answers by stating that it was difficult to demonstrate such an improvement conclusively. Many were also concerned that activities other than Right to Read may have been involved when there was an improvement in reading abilities.   Table 13 gives the results.

Table 13

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Who

Felt Students in Their System are Reading Better

Because of the Right to Read Program

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	40	20	40
Two Years	11	27	73	0
Three Years or More	38	45	3	53
Total	59	41	18	41

From this data, it would seem that the Directors who had been in the program for two years, were far less likely to feel that their children were reading better because of Right to Read than were the Directors who had been in the program either a longer, or a shorter time period. Some 73 percent of these Two Year Directors were of the opinion that their children were not reading better because of Right to Read, only some 3 percent of the Directors who had been in the program three or more years were so willing to say that their children had not improved in reading due to Right to Read.

We asked the Directors to comment on their answer to this question. Some of the comments are quite instructive.

o   "Reading scores on standardized tests are improving"

o   "I don't know yet, but the program has brought emphasis to reading"

o   "Certainly Right to Read has given added impetus to our already
      improved reading program"

o   "It's hard to attribute improvement only to Right to Read. Our
      individualized reading program has played a large role in our
      reading program."

o   "Hopefully, but not necessarily because of Right to Read. Our
      individualized reading program has played a large role in
      our reading program"

o   "The upper class teachers are noticing the difference."

Carry Over From Right to Read to Other Subject Areas

The Directors were asked if the Right to Read program had a carry over to the content of other subject areas. They gave a variety of responses to this question. The responses tended to be of the character of one of the following four types:

       o   Yes, with specific examples

       o   Little, or some

       o   No carry over, or

       o   Do not know yet.

Several of the examples given by those Directors who said that there had been some carry over are as follows:

       o   "New reading lab at secondary level programs; classes and teachers in for mini-courses; not based on reading deficiency."

       o   "New social study units are being written which involve word study and study skills for grades 5 and 6."

       o   "Junior high teachers asked for workshops on reading in content areas done during released time."

       o   "I am establishing a study skill oriented 'Reading in Content Areas' next fall."

Administrative Support for Right to Read Programs

We then asked the Directors about whether or not they felt that they had received administrative support for their Right to Read Program. Administrative support is necessary within a system to do any new project which requires resources. These resources can include expenditure of funds, released time for in-service training or staff time to work on a new project. When asked whether or not the school system had received administrative support, an overwhelming majority, nine out of ten, said that they had. While the level of support was high for all three groups, the Two-Year Directors had a significant minority (two out of ten) who felt that they had not received

the necessary administrative support. Table 12 presents these results.

Table 14

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Who Felt

Their Right to Read Program Had Received Administration Support

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	100	0	0
Two Years	11	82	18	0
Three or More Years	38	89	5	5
Total	59	90	5	5

Right to Read Impact on the Secondary Level

An open ended question was asked to elicit the impact the Directors felt that the Right to Read program was having on the secondary level in their system. From the written comments, it appears that there has been little impact. The majority of the respondents indicated that little impact had occurred at the secondary level.

This might be due to the fact that almost all of the Directors were employed at the elementary level and possibly had little contact with the school staff at the secondary level. Hence it was relatively difficult for these Right to Read Directors to share their new skills and knowledge with the secondary level teachers.

Level of Support from the State

We asked several questions about the amount and quality of support the local Right to Read Directors felt that they had obtained from the state. When asked if they received the necessary tools to carry out their Right to Read program, over two thirds (68%) indicated YES, while only 10 percent stated NO. On the whole, the Directors who had been in the program for three or more years felt that they had more support from the state than did the directors who had been in the program for a shorter period of time.

Table 15

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Who Felt
They Received the Necessary Tools from the State

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	60	10	30
Two Years	11	55	18	27
Three or More Years	38	74	8	18
Total	59	58	10	22

When asked if the state had made available good teachers or consultants, over two thirds (68%) stated YES. For this question, the First Year Directors were most positive, with eight out of ten agreeing that the state had provided good teachers or consultants. See Table 14 for this data.

Several suggestions were made as to what services the state could provide to local education authorities. The greatest expressed need was for more technical assistance aimed at the particular situation of their specific school. Such assistance would include consultants, materials,

and staff development workshops.

Table 16

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Who Felt

The State Had Made Available Good Teachers or Consultants

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
One Year	10	80	20	0
Two Years	11	55	36	9
Three or More Years	38	68	18	13
Total	59	68	23	10

How Successful has Right to Read Been?

Each Director was asked "On the whole, in your judgement, how successful has the Right to Read program been in _your_ locality?" The results are presented in Table 17.

Table 17

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Judging the

Success of the Right to Read Program in Their Locality

Years in Program	N	Not at All Successful	Somewhat Successful	Fairly Successful	Very Successful
One Year	10	0	50	20	10
Two Years	11	0	36	55	9
Three or More Years	38	3	21	58	16
Total	59	2	29	51	13

The Directors, for the most part, felt that the Right to Read program had been "fairly successful" in their local educational agencies. Half

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felt that the program had been "fairly successful", while about three out of

ten felt that it had only been "somewhat successful". About 13 percent felt

that their program had been "very successful". The first year Directors

were considerably less satisfied than were the more experienced ones. Half of them

had the feeling that their programs were only "somewhat successful", a

considerably larger percentage than that of the more experienced Directors.

Is Your Community Still Involved in Right to Read?

A very large majority (86%) of the Directors consider their communities

to still be involved in the Right to Read program. Some 8 percent felt that

their communities had dropped out and 5 percent did not answer this question.

On this question, as well as some of the others it is well to remember that

there were some 17 percent of the total number of Right to Read Directors

who did not return their questionnaire even after three mailings.

These people probably would be more likely to have indicated that

their community was no longer a member of the Right to Read program.

Table 18

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Year in the Program Who

Felt Their Communities Were Still Involved in Right to Read

Years in Program	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO Answer
One Year	10	80	10	10
Two Years	11	64	27	9
Three or More Years	38	94	3	3
Total	59	86	8	5

As Table 18 indicates, about three in ten of the Directors who have been in the program for two years feel that their community is no longer a part of the Right to Read effort. On the other hand only one in ten of the one year Directors and only about 3 percent of the three or more year directors feel that they have dropped out of the program.

When asked what "being involved" in the Right to Read program meant, the Directors gave the following types of activities as indicating their continuing involvement:

o   attending workshops

o   staff development

o   implementing goals and objectives

o   maintenance of programs initiated

o   Task Force still meets.

Successes and Problems of the Local Directors

The last questions of our survey asked the local Directors of the Right to Read program to tell us about any successes or problems they have had with the Right to Read program.

In terms of successes, several specific examples were cited such as:

o   uninterrupted silent reading

o   addition of new language arts

o   development of a basic skills center

Other Directors commented on the increased level of involvement that the teachers had with each other, either on just the elementary level or with other teachers at both elementary and secondary levels. One quote indicates this success:

> "Teachers for the first time had an opportunity
> to meet with one another to discuss student
> progress in reading through the grades. Seldom
> do elementary, junior high, and senior high teachers
> get together for this special purpose."

Other successes involved the skills acquired and professional network that were developed for the local Directors. Several local Directors considered the communication with other Right to Read Directors to be highly beneficial.

One comment that appears to sum it up was:

> "The major success with Right to Read has been its
> identifiability as an 'umbrella' concept in reading
> efforts; that is, the school and community recognize
> the merit of the effort and know it has top level
> sanction, thus it is usually easier to 'sell' and
> promote its programs and concept."

Several categories of problems were frequently mentioned. The one mentioned the most dealt with lack of administrative support. Although it appears that there was initial support, continuing support for the Right to Read program was another issue. Some of the local Directors experienced dwindling support when

1) it required the administrators to possibly make some changes, or

2) changes in administrative personnel.

Very often, new administrators would come in with their own pet programs, or they would lack an understanding of what was involved when the school had initially joined Right to Read.

Other respondents commented that there was a lack of training beyond the initial activities. This led to reduced involvement on the part of administrators, teachers and parents.

Another problem tended to be a lack of time to do all the Right to
Read activities and all the other duties which the local Right to Read
Director had to assume. For the most part, the local Right to Read Directors
had many other responsibilites other than Right to Read.

A lack of funds for training or for the acquisition of material or
secretarial assistance was often expressed.

One individual noted that when the original local Right to Read
Director left and was replaced, the new person was not given the same
level of training. This lack of training was a hinderence for a fuller
involvement of this school system in the Right to Read program.

ANALYSIS BY TYPE OF CITY

In this section of the evaluation we present the analysis of the questionnaire data from the Right to Read local Directors by the type of city from which they come. Four types of cities or towns were used:

o   Big Cities

o   Industrial Suburbs

o   Residential Suburbs

o   Other.

These types of cities were defined in the Reading 1974-1975 Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (1975, Mass. Department of Education, pp 11-12).

> Big Cities generally refer to communities designated as central cities according to the 1970 United States Census. Examples of Massachusetts big cities include Brockton, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Worcester.
>
> Industrial Suburbs generally include three types of communities: Suburbs in the inner Boston circle with below average family income and with more than 20% commercial and 7% industrial land use;suburbs in the outer Boston circle with below average family income and with more than 20% commercial and 7% industrial land use;and Suburbs of central cities other than Boston with below average family income and with more than 20% commercial and 7% industrial land use. Examples of industrial suburbs are Cambridge, Chelsea, Medford, Quincy, Peabody, Waltham, Lee and Monson.
>
> Residential Suburbs generally fall into three categories: Suburbs of Boston (not Industrial Suburbs) with average family incomes up to $16,000; Suburbs of Boston (not Industrial Suburbs) with average family incomes over $16,000; and Suburbs of central cities other than Boston with above average incomes. Examples include Arlington, Braintree, Framingham, Scituate, Walpole, Andover, Dover, Milton, Newton, Chelmsford, Shrewsbury, Wilbraham.
>
> Other communities generally include the following types: Resort towns in the Cape Cod area; Suburbs of cities other than Boston (not Industrial Suburbs) with less than average family income; Towns with below average family income and industrial/commercial land use; Towns with below average family income that are non-industrial, non-commercial and non-resort areas; and communities with a population of less than 2,500 inhabitants but not resort areas. Examples of Other communities include Barnstable, Chatham, Yarmouth, Stockbridge, Bridgewater, Hadley, Oxford, Stoughton, Newburyport, Taunton, Ayer, Kingston, Organge, Webster, Ashfield, Dunstable, Plympton.

In the tables in this section, the data for the total group is not given since the totals were discussed in the previous section where the analysis was by year in the program. All the Directors who answered our questionnaire conducted a local needs assessment related to reading issues. Thus there was no differention by type of city on this step. Table 19 presents the information on the second step of Right to Read implementation on the local level, that of establishing a local Task Force made up of professionals to assist in the Right to Read effort.

Table 19

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of City or Town Who

Established a Local Task Force of Professionals

Type of City or Town	N	Percent Yes	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	100	0	0
Industrial Suburbs	14	100	0	0
Residential Suburbs	27	100	0	0
Other Communities	7	86	0	4

All the Directors, except one from an "Other" town reported that they had taken this second step, the establishment of a local Task Force of professionals.

Considerably more differentiation by type of town was observable on the third step, that of establishing a local Advisory Council made up of parents and citizens. As indicated in Table 20, fewer of the Industrial Suburbs than either the Big Cities or the Residential Suburbs were able to establish a local advisory council. In the smaller Other towns, all were able to establish such councils. Thus while less than four out of ten of the Industrial Suburbs were able to establish advisory councils, some

five to six out of ten of the Big Cities and Residential Suburbs were able to and all of the Other towns could establish these councils.

Table 20

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of City or Town Who
Established a Local Advisory Council of Parents

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	55	45	0
Industrial Suburbs	14	36	57	7
Residential Suburbs	27	59	41	0
Other Communities	7	100	0	0

We feel that the results in Table 20 may relate to greater reluctance of school personnel in the industrial suburbs to involve parents. In the Big Cities, there have often been court cases or federal (e.g. Title I) programs which have required citizen advisory groups and hence the school people are somewhat more accepting of such organizations. In the Residential Suburbs and in the Other types of communities, there may be more of a similarity in socio-economic level and ways of thinking between the parents and the school officials.

The fourth implementation step is the preparation of a local Right to Read plan for the development of staff. This data is given in Table 21. Interestingly, there is little differentiation among the three major types of communities, with Big Cities actually being somewhat more likely to have prepared such a plan than the other types of communities. On the other hand, the smaller Other communities had only three of the seven having accomplished this step.

Table 21

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who

Prepared a Local Right to Read Plan for Staff Development

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	82	9	9
Industrial Suburbs	14	71	21	7
Residential Suburbs	27	74	22	3
Other Communities	7	43	29	29

In Table 22 is presented the data for the last of local Right to Read implementation steps, that of actually conducting a local staff development program. As can be seen, the Big Cities were more likely to have actually conducted such a staff development program than were the other types of communities (91%). The smaller Other communities had the most difficulties in actually getting a staff development project underway, with only four of the seven able to do so (57%).

Table 22

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who

Conducted a Local Staff Development Program

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	91	9	0
Industrial Suburbs	14	64	21	14
Residential Suburbs	27	67	22	11
Other Communities	7	57	29	14

When we asked for activities other than those five on the Implementation Stages, we found that the results were just about the opposite of those for the staff development. As indicated in Table 23, it was the smaller Other communities which led the way with 86 percent reporting some type of other activities, while the Big Cities were lagging, with only 36 percent having some activity other than staff development on the list. Thus there seems to have been a clear choice, with the smaller communities not being oriented toward staff development and the larger communities much more oriented toward such regular activities.

Table 23

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who

Had Right to Read Activities Other than the Five

Implementation Activities

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO Answer
Big City	11	36	18	45
Industrial Suburbs	14	57	7	36
Residential Suburbs	27	56	0	44
Other Communities	7	86	0	14

Establish Right to Read Goals

When asked if their system had established Right to Read goals, there was little difference among the types of communities. All of the Big Cities had, some 93 percent of the Industrial Suburbs did, 89 percent of the Residential Suburbs, and 86 percent of the Other types of communities did.

In-Service Training for Right to Read

Table 24 indicates that there was some variation by type of community with respect to whether or not they provided in-service training. While some 91 percent of the Big Cities did, only 57 percent of the smaller Other towns. did.

Table 24

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who

Said their Town Provided Right to Read In-Service Training

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	91	9	0
Industrial Suburbs	14	86	14	0
Residential Suburbs	27	74	19	7
Other Communities	7	57	29	14

When asked about the success of the teacher training, the Big Cities and the smaller Other communities were more likely to see the training as having been very successful (see Table 25), while both the Industrial Suburbs and the Residential Suburbs were less happy with the results of their in-service programs.

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Table 25

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who Judge

Their Inservice Teacher Training to have Been Successful

Type of Community	N	Not at All Successful	Somewhat Successful	Fairly Successful	Very Successful	No Answer
Big Cities	11	0	0	27	55	18
Industrial Suburbs	14	0	21	43	21	15
Residential Suburbs	27	0	30	52	15	3
Other Communities	7	0	14	14	43	29

Assessment of Teacher Workshops

When asked if teacher workshops were assessed, the Big Cities led the way, with some 73 percent YES, while the smaller Other communities had only 14 percent YES. Table 26 gives the full data.

Table 26

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who Indicated

That Teacher Workshops were Assessed

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	73	9	18
Industrial Suburbs	14	57	36	7
Residential Suburbs	27	63	19	19
Other Communities	7	14	43	43

Assessment of Reading Needs Made in Classrooms

The types of cities and towns differ relatively little on the proportion which had established an assessment of children's reading needs in the classrooms. Some 82 percent of the Big Cities had done this, but only 57 percent of the Industrial Suburbs, with the other two types of communities falling in between (59% for Residential Suburbs, 71 percent for Other communities).

Table 27

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who Said

Their Community Assessed Reading Needs in the Classroom

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO Answer
Big Cities	11	82	18	0
Industrial Suburbs	14	57	29	14
Residential Suburbs	27	59	41	0
Other Communities	7	71	14	14

Are Students Reading Better Because of Right to Read?

On the fundamental question of whether they felt that students were reading better because of Right to Read, the Residential Suburbs were the most optimistic, with almost half (48%) agreeing that Right to Read had caused their students to read better. The other types of communities were less optimistic with the percents agreeing ranging from 29 percent (Other communities) to 36 percent (Big Cities and Industrial Suburbs).

Table 28

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who Feel

Students in Their School System are Reading Better

Because of Right to Read

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	36	9	55
Industrial Suburbs	14	36	7	57
Residential Suburbs	27	48	0	52
Other Communities	7	29	0	71

It should be noted, that relatively few of the local Right to Read
Directors say that children are not learning to read better, most just give
NO ANSWER to this question. On the comments, most would say that they did
not know if the children were reading better or worse, or that if they were
reading better it was hard to say that the Right to Read programs caused
the increase.

Support for Local Right to Read Program

There were three questions about the amount of support that the local
Right to Read program received. The first question asked about local administrative
support, the second asked if the Director felt he or she had received the
necessary tools to carry out the Right to Read program and the third question
asked about whether or not the state had made available good teachers
or consultants.

Table 29

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who Felt

That Their Program Received Administrative Support

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	100	0	0
Industrial Suburbs	14	100	0	0
Residential Suburbs	27	85	7	7
Other Communities	7	71	14	14

As can be seen in Table 29, the smaller communities tended to feel that they had less administrative support than did the Big Cities or the Industrial Suburbs. In these latter two, every Right to Read Director felt that he or she had received administrative support. Even in the small Other Communities, some seven out of ten of the Directors felt that they also had received administrative support.

Table 30

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who Felt They

Had Received the Necessary Tools to Carry Out the Right to Read Program

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	82	0	18
Industrial Suburbs	14	64	7	29
Residential Suburbs	27	63	15	22
Other Communities	7	57	29	14

The Directors in the Big Cities seemed much more likely to feel that they had all the necessary tools (82%) to carry out the Right to Read Program than did the Directors from the other communities where about six

out of ten said that they felt they had received the necessary tools. There

was a very clear progression of the proportion of Directors who specifically

said that they did not receive the necessary tools. None of the Big City

Directors, 7 percent of the Industrial Suburb Directors, 15 percent of

the Residential Suburb Directors and 29 percent of the Other Community

Directors.

Table 31

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who Felt That

The State Had Made Available Good Teachers or Consultants

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	73	18	9
Industrial Suburbs	14	79	21	0
Residential Suburbs	27	52	33	15
Other Communities	7	86	14	0

While the smaller communities felt that they had less administrative

support and fewer tools to carry out the Right to Read program, they were

more likely to feel that the State had provided them with good teachers

and consultants than were the Directors from other communities. Some

86 percent of the Other Communities felt that the state had provided them

with good consultants, while only 52 percent of the Directors from Residential

Suburbs felt this.

How Successful was Right to Read in Your Locality?

On the crucial question of how successful the Directors judged their
local Right to Read programs to be, there were some interesting effects by
type of community. As indicated in Table 32, the Industrial Suburbs and
the Other Communities felt that their programs were somewhat more successful
than did the people in the Big Cities and in the Residential Suburbs.
Thus, despite the somewhat better resources and support for the Right to
Read programs in the Big Cities, a full 45 percent felt that their program
was only "Somewhat Successful".

If a scale is used where Not at All Successful = 0, Somewhat Successful
= 1, Fairly Successful = 2 and Very Successful = 3, the average rating of
success for the Big City Directors was 1.73; for Industrial Suburbs it was
1.92; for Residential Suburbs it was 1.84; and for Other Communities it was 1.80.

Table 32

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of Community Who Rated

The Success of their Right to Read Program

Type of Community	N	Not at All Successful	Somewhat Successful	Fairly Successful	Very Successful	No Answe
Big Cities	11	0	45	36	18	0
Industrial Suburb	14	0	21	57	14	8
Residential Suburb	27	4	30	48	15	4
Other Communities	7	14	0	71	14	0

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Still Involved in Right to Read?

The last question analyzed by type of community was the question about whether or not the local school system was still involved in the Right to Read program. Only in the Big Cities was there a drop-out of any size, with some 18 percent indicating that their city was no longer participating in Right to Read. For the other three community sizes there were no drop-outs in the Industrial Suburbs or in the Other Communities, and 11 percent drop-outs in the Residential Suburbs.

Table 33

Percent of Right to Read Directors by Type of City Who Said That

Their Community was Still Involved in the

Right to Read Program

Type of Community	N	Percent YES	Percent NO	Percent NO ANSWER
Big Cities	11	73	18	9
Industrial Suburbs	14	93	0	7
Residential Suburbs	27	85	11	3
Other Communities	7	100	0	0

Summary

On the whole then, there were some differences by type of communities.
The Big Cities tended to have the more complete and more organized programs,
and tended to have more local support, more administrative support, and were
more likely to have the necessary tools to run their Right to Read Programs.
On the other hand, the Big Cities tended to have somewhat less successful
programs, and to be more discouraged about the progress which their Right
to Read programs were making.

The major contrast was the small Other Communities, which tended to have
somewhat unusual programs, relatively less administrative support and less
resources, and less complete programs. On the other hand these smaller
communities seemed to feel that their Right to Read programs were somewhat
more successful.

What may be going on here is that the problems of students reading are
much more intractible in the Big Cities than they are in the other communities,
especially the Residential Suburbs and the Other Communities. Hence, the
more difficult problems tend to discourage the Big City Directors even when
they have more resources for their programs.

A N A L Y S I S   O F   I N T E R V I E W S

During the Months of May and June twelve interviews were conducted

across the state by two Vázquez, Nuttall staff members. The Right to Read

Directors interviewed were selected to span the state geographically and

to span the types of cities and towns. In this section of the report we

will discuss the major findings of these interviews.

There were several major themes which appeared from among these

interviews. These themes can be summarized as follows:

o   Right to Read efforts are hard to distinguish from
      other programs oriented toward improving reading.

o   The importance of a network of professionals involved in
      Right to Read activities

o   How different are the needs of small school systems from
      the needs of large systems

o   There is a concern about lack of training resources availability
      in some parts of the state.

Right to Read and Other Programs

Numerous interviewers had difficulty in separating the Right to Read

efforts from their regular reading program. Many of the concepts and ideas

developed from Right to Read sources have been adopted into the regular school

programs. Further, some of the ideas learned at Right to Read conferences

have been further developed and funded through other programs, such as

Title I and ESEA. Most of the local Right to Read Directors were heavily

involved in other activities, for example in the larger school systems,

the director of reading, or some other staff position. In the smaller systems

the Right to Read Director was often a Principal or sometimes an elementary

school teacher.

Some Right to Read Directors belong to more than one reading directors'

group. In some cases Right to Read involvement overlaps the training that schools receive from other sources. One school system received federal funds as a demonstration Right to Read program before they joined the Massachusetts Right to Read Effort. This school system was able to do considerable in-service training of the staff through this demonstration grant.

Two other school systems are receiving training and technical assistance from two different educational consortiums. The additional training makes it difficult to state whether or not the training that the local Right to Read Director received through Right to Read was instrumental in bringing about the necessary changes within the school system.

However one clear conclusion was reached, that the Right to Read effort has been a factor in increasing school systems concerns with reading and increasing their committment to reading as a particularly central activity of schools.

Many of the people interviewed saw that the Right to Read activities were a catalyst in making reading a top priority in their school system. On the other side, many indicated that they have decreased their activities as Right to Read Directors as their programs have matured.

Network of Professionals

Many Directors spoke very highly of the Right to Read network that has developed. For them a main strength of Right to Read is getting together with other reading directors on a regular basis to exchange information and ideas. The network of reading professionals seemed to be of particular importance to the people from the smaller school systems. Many of these systems have joined educational consortiums, some of whose activities involve reading and this has also helped them in their needs for contact with other

people faced with similar problems in attempting to improve reading activities in their schools. Several of their suggestions for improvement involved strengthening the network of reading professionals.

Needs of Small School Systems and Large School Systems

Several of the Directors noted the different situations faced by Right to Read Directors in large and small school systems. In the large systems, there tended to be available a set of specialists, often including a reading director. In the smaller systems, this was not the case. The Right to Read Director in the smaller systems usually held some other, often non-related, job such as elementary school principal. Also when an elementary school teacher was the Right to Read Director, getting sufficient time out of the classroom to carry out Right to Read activities was difficult.

The smaller systems were much more dependent on the professional network and some small systems had officially joined consortia which provided them with expertise and training when needed.

Many of the Directors from the smaller systems noted the great value and further need for expert consultants from the state Right to Read office. The Directors from the larger systems were not so dependent on outside support.

Lack of Training Resources

Several of the Directors we interviewed from the western part of the state were concerned about the distance and expense of travel to the Boston area for Right to Read training activities. They felt that because their systems often could not afford to send staff such a distance, the consequent lack of full training made the implementation of the Right to Read program more difficult in that part of the state.

Implementation of the Right to Read Model

The Right to Read model includes five activities which the local Director is expected to accomplish. These steps are:

- o Conduct a needs assessment around reading issues,

- o Establish a Task Force of professionals,

- o Establish a Citizens Advisory Committee,

- o Plan an staff development program,

- o Implement a staff development program.

All of the Directors we talked to had conducted a needs assessment and all had established a Task Force. The professional task force was generally made up of teachers and librarians. In several communities Right to Read was the impetus for library and schools to start working together. Often, also, the Task Force could combine teachers from both the elementary and the secondary levels. Often the first time that teachers from these two different levels had gotten together around substantive issues was due to a Right to Read Task Force.

On the other hand, the Citizens Advisory Committees were the least successful of the Right to Read model steps. Many of the communities just did not establish such committees, in other communities the committees were established but later withered away. Of particular issue was just what the Citizens Advisory Committee was supposed to do? Their role seemed to many Right to Read Directors fairly clear during the first year when the needs assessment was being developed and understood, but after that there did not seem to be any role for them.

Relatively few of the Right to Read Directors had established a full-blown plan for staff development. None of the Directors we talked to actually had a systematic Right to Read staff development program. On the other hand staff development did occur in these school systems, and it was often based on the Right to Read needs assessment. However, a full plan based on the needs assessment seemed not to have occurred.

As indicated earlier, many of the staff development activities were funded by other programs, or were linked to other programs, even if they were based on the Right to Read needs assessment.

Problems Noted

Many of the Directors we talked to noted the particular importance of administrative support. Some noted that when a new principal or a new superintendent came in, he often changed the focus of the Right to Read program. A new administrator often came in with his own pet ideas and wanted to push his own programs and already existing programs, such as Right to Read, were left out.

A particular need often cited was for specialized, particularized expertise related to the immediate reading situation in a given school. Especially in the smaller school systems, the Directors found that the general presentations of material at Right to Read conferences hard to apply at home. They would prefer to have an expert come to their school and offer specific advise to the reading problems as they exist in their school.

Lack of Right to Read funding was often cited. The lack of money was felt to impair the ability of the program to make adequate progress and to force the Right to Read Directors to look for other funding sources to fund some of their Right to Read based ideas.

Successes Noted

All twelve interviews could illustrate at least one significant reading change which occurred within their schools associated with Right to Read. However, many of the Directors were reluctant to say that the Right to Read program was responsible for the significant change by itself, or whether it was just one of several factors together. The change most frequently noted was a greater system, or school, commitment to teaching reading. For example, several schools had been able to adopt a practice of silent reading in the school, where, for a particular time during the day, everyone -sometimes including the custodian and the principal - would stop other activities and silently read a book.

Many of the Directors felt that they had been well trained in the Right to Read model, and especially in the means of conducting a Needs Assessment and of setting up a Professional Task Force.

Most of the Directors we interviewed felt that the initial impact of Right to Read was helpful as it raised people's level of interest in reading. The beginning workshops were especially good and the reading materials were useful.

Conclusions

The Right to Read program, as embodied in the five steps ranging from a needs assessment to the implementation of a planned staff development program seemed to bog down after the first two steps. In all cases, the needs assessment was accomplished, and in almost all cases the Task Force of professionals was established. This Task Force was heavily involved in developing, conducting, and interpreting the needs assessment. However, there did seem to be a difficulty in moving to the next steps, involving a citizens advisory council; developing a full plan of staff development;

and then implementing this plan with appropriate in-service training programs.

Our impression is that the training given in conducting the needs assessment

seemed to have been very effective. Everyone knew how to conduct one,

and how to involve a task force of professionals in the needs assessment.

However, the process seemed to have fallen down shortly after

the needs assessment in many communities. Some of the Directors commented

on how much effort was involved in the first year of Right to Read, when

they conducted the needs assessment relative to how much less they were

doing in the second and subsequent years.

The roles of an advisory council of parents and citizens seemed to

be difficult to define. Many of the school systems had given up on the

idea of a citizens advisory council, yet had an active parental volunteer

program. Two interviewees expressed the frustration they felt over parents

who were not supportive of reading activites of their child. They noted

that parents can easily thwart almost any good reading program by actively

discouraging the reading activities of their child.

On the whole, our impression was that considerably more attention

needs to be paid to the last three steps of the Right to Read model:

    o   Development and use of an Advisory Council of parents and citizens,

    o   Development of a systematic plan for staff development,

    o   Implementation of the planned program for staff development.

However, the Right to Read program is clearly given credit for success

at the first two stages of the model - the needs assessment and the Task

Force. Further, the Right to Read program is widely credited with raising

the committment and attention given to reading in the schools.

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

Several major conclusions can be made from the evaluation analyses. First, it is clear that the first two stages of the Right to Read model, the conducting of a Needs Assessment and the setting up of a professional Task Force have been accomplished by essentially all of the local Right to Read Directors. Similarly, a very high proportion of the local school systems have had some form of workshop and in-service training of teachers around reading topics.

On the other hand, the two steps in-between, step three - the establishment of a citizen's Advisory Council and the development of a detailed plan for staff development based on the needs assessment have been less successful.

Further, while most Directors feel that their Right to Read program has been "Fairly Successful", many have pointed out that the Right to Read is only one of several programs and activities related to reading improvement in the schools. Relatively few Right to Read Directors are willing to say that children in their schools have actually started to read better due to the Right to Read effort.

A major outcome of the Right to Read effort has been an increase in the emphasis which reading has received in the schools, and an increased commitment to reading by the school personnel. Also the program has been successful in establishing a "network" of reading professionals around the state.

There have been differences between the types of cities and towns and the nature of their needs and accomplishments in their Right to Read programs. In general, the Big Cities have more carefully followed the Right to Read model (the five steps) than have the other types of cities. In particular

the Industrial Suburbs have had difficulty with the establishment of a Citizen's Advisory Council and the Other Communities have had trouble with conducting workshops and in-service training. On the other hand the Other Communities seem to have been quite creative in their use of different types of activities as part of the Right to Read program, and feel that the program has been quite successful for them.

The smaller communities have felt a greater need for state supplied or out of the system supplied expertise, while the larger systems generally have not been so dependent on outsiders for the expertise they need.

There seems to have been some differences between the "cohorts" of Right to Read Directors. The cohort who has now been in the program two years seemed on the whole less satisfied and less effective in their Right to Read activities than were the Directors who joined this year, or who had been in the program for three or more years. For example only some 36 percent of the two-year Directors had been able to establish a local staff development program in reading while some 60 percent of the one-year Directors and 82 percent of the three or more year Directors had done so.

In general, however, the more years in the program, the more likely was the full Right to Read model of all five steps to have been accomplished. Also the more years in the program, the more activities other than the five steps were likely to be part of the local Right to Read program. Similarly, the more years of involvement with the program, the more satisfied the Directors were with the accomplishments of the local program.

However, the overall success of the Right to Read programs at the local level must be counted as only moderate. Less than half of the Right to Read Directors were willing to say that the children in their schools were reading better because of Right to Read (41 percent). Almost three out of four (73 percent) of the two-year Directors specifically denied that children in their schools were reading better because of Right to Read.

S P E C I F I C   R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

We can make a set of specific recommendations based on our findings from the evaluation.

A.   The Network of Professionals Should be Enhanced

As the formal Right to Read program now moves into a more general "basic skills" orientation, we need to understand how to apply the lessons learned in the Right to Read program in connection with other types of programs, as well as a continued emphasis on reading.

The development of a network of professionals interested in the issues of teaching reading has been a major accomplishment of the Right to Read effort. A well functioning network supports the isolated reading oriented person in a small school system, and provides allies to the professional concerned with reading in the large school system. Hence one of our major recommendations is that the network should be enhanced.

There are several ways in which this can be done. In future training sessions, if possible the faculty should be drawn from active school personnel who are involved in successful reading programs in Massachusetts. The exchange of telephone numbers, the development of directories, mailing lists, informal interest groups, and other "togetherness" type activities should be encouraged.

We feel that regional meetings should be encouraged, so that school systems which are near each other will get to know each other and be able to call on relatively nearby professionals for assistance and advice. There are several successful and well developed reading programs now in operation and the people running them will be able to strengthen the programs in nearby towns if people know each other and feel free to call or contact each other to discuss reading issues.

B.   Improve Availability of Technical Assistance

Many of the Directors noted the need for more money, resources and technical assistance. While all professional school personnel would like to have more money available for their programs, we feel that there are several "strategic" decisions which can be made which will stretch the available dollars as far as possible.

1.   Disseminate Information of Exemplary Right to Read Programs

The identification of five exemplary Right to Read programs is currently underway. Once these five programs are identified, several steps should be taken to disseminate the results. We recommend that all written descriptions and materials be placed in the six regional centers of the the Department of Education for the local school systems to examine. People knowledgeable about these exemplary programs should be available to consult and offer advice to other school systems in developing their own stronger programs. We feel that the State Department of Education will need to take additional responsibility for fostering the exchange of expertise and advice from the personnel in one system to those in another. The role of a "broker" of expertise will be an important one for the State Department of Education to undertake.

2.   Place information related to the recommended reading programs
     in the Regional Offices.

 We feel that many school systems have now increased their interest and

concern with reading and want to improve their programs. Their access to

information about recommended programs, innovative reading material,

posters encouraging reading, volunteer training programs material,

and agendas and material supporting various in-service training programs,

and information about and examples of different reading assessment programs

should be widely available. The Department of Education's Regional Offices

are a natural repository for such materials, though there are other potential

repositories, such as the libraries in some of the larger cities.

3.   Increase the use of local experts from libraries and colleges

     We feel that a major point should be the use of local or nearby sources

of expertise. That way the school person can frequently maintain contact

and repeatedly return for additional consultation where if the expertise

comes from a far distant city, such follow-up is very difficult. The

involvement of local librarians is a major point to encourage. Many librarians

are interested, and even if not currently experts - they will often become

interested enough to become experts in some aspects of the reading issues of

children. Further, one of the major successes of the Right to Read programs

have been the fostering of contacts between school personnel and librarians.

Libraries are widespread, have their own network of professionals, and are

vitally interested in reading. Our recommendation is that a major effort

be continued to involve the librarians in the Right to Read programs.

     Similarly the local colleges and universities have considerable

resources to offer. Again we stress the value of using colleges from nearby

towns rather than experts "from afar". While there is a certain prestige inherent in the consultant or expert from far away, and the expert from a more distant place may well be better or more informed - we still would recommend the use of local experts, because of the value of the follow-up and continuity possible.

4. Experienced Right to Read Directors Should be Used as Experts

It was evident in our data that many of the older, well established Right to Read programs had solved some of the problems facing the first year programs. We feel that the Right to Read Directors are themselves a major source of expertise and should be encouraged to be the teaching staff at local workshops and in-service programs for their own and for nearby school systems. Similarly, many of the larger school systems have other personnel who could be called upon for expertise in a variety of areas. For example some of the Directors noted the need for proposal writing skills. Many of the larger systems have people who are quite experienced in writing proposals, and these people could be called upon to conduct a workshop or to offer advice to neighboring communities.

5. If Possible the Regional Education Department Staffs should have a Reading Specialist

This is one of our most expensive recommendations. We feel that the regional offices of the Department of Education should have a staff person who is expert in reading issues, and who takes responsibility for assisting local school systems in reading technical issues either himself, or by acting as a broker between the needs and the sources of local expertise. It is unlikely that one person would have all the necessary expertise, so in some areas the broker role would be unavoidable.

C.   Improve the Availability of On-Going Training

There is a need for on-going training for the Right to Read programs.
Several Directors noted to us that they received excellent training in the
first two steps of the Right to Read model (Needs Assessment, Task Force),
but that then they were not sure what to do with the remaining three steps.
Clearly work needs to be done to increase the usefulness of the Citizen's
Advisory Council - many local systems did not know how to set one up, or what
it would do once it was set up. Similarly, the quality and completeness of
the local plans for staff development were not as good as they should have
been.

We feel these are issues of on-going training. Several Directors noted
that they were very active the first year of their involvement in Right to
Read, but much less active once the needs assessment was completed. We
feel that they really need more training for these second and third year
programs of the use of an advisory committee, how to develop a complete
staff development plan, and how to implement an in-service training program
based on such a development plan.   Many school systems are actively involved
in in-service programs, but these programs are not related to an overall plan
of the needs for staff development.

Part of the problem is, we feel, that the theory of how to train for
these activities is not well developed nor widely diffused. While the
methodology of needs assessments has been well developed in the last ten
years and is now fairly well diffused - the knowledge of how to develop
adequate and complete plans for staff development certainly is not. Further,
the use of citizens and parents in advisory roles is fraught with political
and other difficulties. While some of these issues are being worked out,
the appropriate answers for different types of communities, with different
types of citizens and parents, have certainly not yet been well developed

and diffused. Hence finding experts who can conduct training sessions in
these areas   much more difficult that in finding experts in needs assessments.

Another set of issues about training is now emerging with the maturation
of the Right to Read programs in many communities. These are technical,
and often extremely specific issues - such as what is the appropriate assessment
procedure for ninth graders who are reading on the third or fourth grade
level, or how can reading issues be reinforced in mathematics lessons, or
what is the appropriate way to handle reading issues in connection with
a bilingual program? The Directors noted that the general, global training
which can be given at a large training conference can not really deal with
these very specific and very technical issues.

What is needed are smaller - sometimes even one-on-one - training sessions
and consultation of such highly technical issues. We recommend that a "menu"
of such highly technical topics be distributed across the state, with an eye
to offering several such specialized training programs - each for only
half a dozen or fewer people who have that specific need. Setting up and
staffing such highly specialized training sessions will clearly be a difficult
task, but one which the advanced stage of the Right to Read effort now needs.

1.   Use of Volunteers

The training, selection, supervising, utilizing, and selection and
recruiting of volunteers for reading assistance is a major need. While the
Right to Read program has offered several training sessions in this area,
considerably more needs to be offered in this area according to many of the
Directors. Here is an area where experienced - and successful - Right to
Read Directors should be able to offer such training programs to others.

2.   Training Replacement Right to Read Directors

We found that in several towns as the original Director of the Right to Read program moved on, and a replacement was brought in, inadequate attention was given to the training of the new Director. Many people, both within the town and outside it, felt that the new person should be able to just step in and conduct the same type of operation which the original Director may have taken one or two years to learn. We feel that particular attention needs to be given to the issue of training replacement Directors.

One aspect might be to try to have two Co-Directors of Right to Read in each school system. That way, when one is replaced, the other is available for on-the-job training of the replacement. Some of the research on the diffusion of innovations has indicated that such diffusion back to the original organization is much stronger if two or more people from the agency are originally trained.

Another aspect would be the automatic inclusion of the replacement Director in the training programs for new Directors. This is often difficult if the new person comes on-board during the year, rather than at the beginning.

At the very least, a replacement Director should be visited by someone associated with the Right to Read program, perhaps by a Director of a neighboring town - and given a set of materials and training aids. We feel that the "network" should be brought into play as soon as possible to assist the new replacement Director to understand the approaches, techniques, and ideas of the Right to Read effort.

3.   Orientation of New Administrators and School Committee Personnel

Several Directors noted that administrative support for their Right

to Read programs often diminished with the replacement of school superintendents,

principals, or school committee people. We often tend to forget how much

education went into the original decision of a school system to join the

Right to Read effort. A new administrator of school committee member does

not have such a background and often will not understand the issues of the

Right to Read program in their school system.

We recommend that a special training system, perhaps in the form of

booklets, or also in the form of a slide and talk presentation be specifically

designed for the orientation of new administrative and school committee

personnel.

One of the issues is the role appropriate for the citizens Advisory

Council. We feel that one appropriate role would be for these Councils

to be responsible for the orientation of such new administrative and school

committee personnel. Thus when a new principal or superintendent comes in

it would be citizens - not school staff who would be responsible for such

orientation. We feel that such a role is appropriate for the citizens, would

be acceptable to the school personnel, and would be easier than having

people who will have to work for a new boss be responsible for orienting them

to the Right to Read program.

If a state-wide orientation set of materials was developed, they could

be modified to fit the local situation and then special training sessions

could be given to the citizens on how to conduct such an orientation session.

In most middle to large school systems, each year there are several administrators

and school committee personnel who are new. We feel that such orientation

sessions should, if at all possible, be conduced on a one-on-one basis,

rather than in a group session. That is, one citizen would orient one

administrator in the privacy of the administrator's office about the Right to Read program using the prepared briefing materials.

4.   Geographic Availability of Training

We have emphasized the need for several _local_ workshops and training sessions, serving neighboring towns, as contrasted to major - all state training conferences. While large state conferences will continue to be useful, we would recommend that the emphasis be shifted to more regional operations. When state-wide conferences are held, there remains a concern among some of the people in the Western part of the state that some of the conferences be held out there.

We recommend that about one state-wide conference out of four be held in Springfield, one in four in Worcester, and two in four in Boston areas.

D.   Development of Outreach Program for Parents

The involvement of parents and other citizens has been an integral part of the Right to Read effort from the beginning. It is well recognized how important the home is in encouraging and supporting the development of better reading among children. Yet there remains difficulties in the involvement of parents in Right to Read activities. We feel that part of the problem is theoretical - we do not yet know enough about how to successfully involve parents - and part of the problem is that not enough attention has yet been placed on this issue. With the development of volunteer programs, a good start has been made in the development of techniques for utilizing non-professionals in reading activities. However we recommend that a specific program be launched to develop parental outreach and parental activities appropriate for the Right to Read effort. The involvement of parents is one area where the Right to Read program would

offer less of an overlap with other reading oriented programs. On the whole, we feel that parental involvement is an under-utilized area and one which should be further developed.

This area of developing a parental involvement program is another one which would be a natural role for a Citizens Advisory Council to become involved in. We suggest that, on a pilot basis, some of the communities which do have active Citizens Advisory Councils attempt to develop pilot parental involvement programs and then hold workshops and training sessions on them for other communities.

We feel that the development of such parental outreach programs and parental involvement in reading activities will not be especially easy, but that there exists on a national level considerable experience with parental involvement programs. An ERIC search would quickly provide considerable information on this topic.

E.   The Small School Problem

The small school system, where the Right to Read Director is often a building principal or an elementary teacher, often has particular problems. We feel that particular attention should be given to supporting these smaller systems. The state Department of Education should give extra attention to the smaller systems, and the network of resources should be especially designed to assist these smaller systems. Especially when the small system Right to Read Director has difficulty in getting away from the school, we feel that where possible, consultants and assistants should go to the small system and provide on-the-spot assistance. Telephone assistance can help a principal who is a Right to Read Director, but is of less help to a classroom teacher.

F.   Need for Further Development of the Right to Read Model

Despite the difficulties many school systems have had in the full development of the five step Right to Read model, some have completed all steps and now express a need for further steps. We feel that theoretical attention needs to be given to the expansion and further development of this model to steps six, seven, etc.   For example the development of a system wide information and monitoring system for the yearly assessment and follow-up of each child's progress in reading could be part of an expanded Right to Read model. Other possibilities are the incorporation of Reading Skills competencies in new hires. One school system has as part of its position available notices for teachers the paragraph:

"_____ is a "Right to Read" community and preference
will be given to candidates who have demonstrated an
understanding of the need to integrate reading in the
content areas."

We feel that the further development of the Right to Read model might be the focus of a state-wide, or several regional conferences of experienced Right to Read Directors. It is our feeling that many of these experienced people need new worlds to conquer and the further development of the basic Right to Read model would be something they could really get involved in.

G.   Further Development of the Role and Use of Citizens Councils

Several of our recommendations have involved the point that there is a problem with just what the citizens advisory councils can and should do. We feel that something needs to be done to strengthen these roles. Many school systems now just do not establish such councils, or once established, some wither away due to lack of use. We feel that the involvement of parents and other citizens in the reading development of children is quite important

and should be retained and enlarged. However, we recognize the current issue of just what are these citizens to do.

We have recommended that citizens could and should become involved in the orientation of new administrative and school committee members to the issues of the Right to Read effort and of reading issues in general.

We have recommended that the citizens council could and should become involved in parental outreach and in training parents to assist in the development of the reading skills of their own children.

We also feel that the citizens council should work with school committees to have policies adopted at the highest level of the school system with respect to the emphasis to be put on reading in the school system. We feel that the development and recommendation of official policy statements to school committees is an appropriate and useful activity for such citizens councils.

Another area where the citizens councils could be active is in the interfacing of the schools with other community resources, such as the CETA programs and the libraries. We feel that a citizens council could easily serve as a bridging mechanism among several such community agencies which have a common concern with reading. Similarly the whole area of adult reading is one where the citizens council could be far more effective than professionals only associated with elementary schools could be.

On the whole then, we feel that it should be highly possible to increase the roles and functions of such citizens councils in ways which would make major contributions to the reading efforts of school based professionals without at the same time threatening the schools with the interference of non-professionals in school activities.

H.   Interfacing with Special Education

The emphasis of reading is often involved with the reading difficulties of particular children. Many children have difficulty with reading as one component of their special education needs. We feel that a system wide program such as Right to Read also needs to take particular account of the special needs of some children. There needs to be greater interfacing and coordination of the reading efforts and the special education staff. On a state-wide basis, it may be possible to hold special conferences focussed on the needs of teaching reading to particular types of special needs children, such as the deaf.

I.   Interfacing with Bilingual Programs

Recently there has been a considerable expansion of the number of bilingual programs available in the state. These programs force several quite important issues on a general reading program. We urge that a task force be formed to attempt to understand and to develop a program for the interfacing of the Right to Read efforts with the bilingual programs.

J.   Expansion to the Secondary Level

While many of the school systems currently involve both secondary and elementary level teachers in Right to Read activities, the focus remains on the elementary level. We feel that the higher level reading skills are only fully developed at the secondary level, and many, many children leave the elementary grades without full reading capabilities. There must be a greater emphasis on reading programs at the secondary level. We feel that the development of an individualized yearly assessment and follow-up program will make clear the needs of older students for reading programs. Hence our recommendation is that the Right to Read program pay particular attention to the expansion of activities to the secondary level. We feel that this recommendation

should have particular point for those older, well established Right to Read programs where the elementary level operations are going well.

K.   Development of an Individualized Yearly Assessment and Follow-Up System

With the widespread development of computerized information systems, we feel that it would be wise to move toward establishing a yearly assessment and follow-up system so that the individual progress of each child can be routinely monitored. Such a system could allow the Right to Read Director to follow individual children, as well as "cohorts" of children. Thus if a whole class missed learning something like capitalization in the fourth grade, they could be taught it in a special program in the seventh grade.

We know that there are now miniature computer systems, some available for less than $1,000 which could be used by an individual Right to Read Director. It would be necessary for a state-wide program to task force to establish the system design and perhaps to commission the development of the software (computer programs) but then the system could be easily used by individual Right to Read Directors.
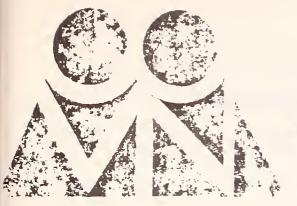
The next major stage of the Right to Read program has to be the actual improvement of the reading capabilities of individual children. This will involve, we feel, the routine assessment of the progress of children and the linking of that progress to the programs and educational experiences of each child. This child-level stage of the Right to Read program will involve considerable need for further theoretical and applied development But if we are to reach the ultimate aim of improving the reading of all children, we must eventually get down to servicing children themselves.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have attempted to develop a set of recommendations based on our experience in the evaluation of the Right to Read program this year. Most of these recommendations are focussed on the local programs, though some involve coordination and support from the state, and some are directed to the state level operations.

We have tried to keep the recommendations generally away from the "more money" type of issues, though some of our recommendations would require additional funding. We feel that, for the most part, what is needed is greater professional work on both a set of theoretical and a set of practical issues. We have made clear that not all the answers are currently known, and that considerable further thought and development will be necessary to create workable and effective programs in these areas.

We are hopeful. Most of the Right to Read Directors we met and talked to impressed us with their committment to children and to reading. We feel that within the Right to Read movement there exists considerable professional strength and there is a basis for further progress and development. While most Directors did not feel that the problems have yet been solved, they were quite interested in trying to be part of the solution for the sake of their pupils.

"Research & Evaluation in Social Sciences, Health & Education"

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LOCAL RIGHT-TO-READ
DIRECTORS

1. What is your name?_____

2. What school system are you with? _____

3. What is/was your role in Right-to-Read in your locality?_____

_____

4. What year(s) were you involved with the Right to Read Effort? (Please check)

   ____'73-'74, ____'74-'75, ____'75-'76, ____'76-'77, ____'77-'78

5. How many Right to Read training sessions have you attended?_____

6. Many Right to Read local programs have included some of the following
   activities. Would you indicate whether you local program has, or has
   not included these activities? (Please check YES if your local program
   has involved this activity or NO if it has not).

a. ____YES, ____NO   Conducted a local Needs Assessment of reading related
                      needs.

b. ____YES, ____NO   Establishment of a local Task Force made up of
                      professionals to assist in the local Right to Read effort.

c. ____YES, ____NO   Establishment of a local advisory council made up of
                      parents and citizens from the area.

d. ____YES, ____NO   The preparation of a local Right to Read plan for the
                      development of staff.

e. ____YES, ____NO   The conducting of a local staff development program.

f. ____YES, ____NO   Other activities not given above. (What were they?)

   _____

   _____

7. Did your school system establish Right-to-Read goals and objectives?_____

   What were some of them? _____

   _____

8. Did your school system provide in-service teacher training? ___YES?____NO

   In your opinion, was the teacher training

   ____Not at All   ____Somewhat   ____Fairly   ____Very
       Successful   Successful   Successful   Successful

9. Were the teacher workshops assessed? ____YES? ____NO

   How was this done?_____

   _____

10. Was there an assessment of reading needs made in the classrooms?

                                                  ____YES, ____NO

11. How did your system measure reading improvement?_____

    _____

12. Are students in your school system reading better because of Right-to
    Read?
            ____YES, ____NO

    Any comments?_____

    _____

13. Has there been any carry over from Right-to-Read to the content or
    other subject areas?

                      _____

    _____

14. Did your school system receive administrative support? ___YES, ____NO

15. What was the impact of Right-to-Read at the secondary level? _____

    _____

16. What support did your system get from the State? _____

    _____

17. Did you receive the necessary tools to carry out your Right-to-Read
    program?
            ____YES, ____NO

18. Has the State made available good teachers or consultants? ____YES, ____NO

19. Are there services that the State could be providing that it is not?

    Please comment_____

    _____

    _____

20. On the whole, in your judgment, how successful has the Right-to-Read program been in your locality?

    ____Not at All   ____Somewhat   ____Fairly   ____Very
    Successful   Successful   Successful   Successful

21. Is your community still involved in the Right-to-Read program?

    ____YES, ____NO

    To what extent? _____

    If your community is no longer involved, why not? _____

    _____

    _____

22. Please add any successes or problems you have had with the Right-to Read program.

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

23. Please write the names and addresses of other people in your system involved in the Right-to-Read effort.

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

Please return your filled out questionnaire to Vázquez, Nuttall Associates.
Thank you.

Vázquez,
Nuttall
Associates,Inc.

RIGHT TO READ QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What town are you with? _____

2. What is/was your role in Right to Read in your locality? _____

3. What year(s) were you involved with the Right to Read effort? (please check)

    ____'73-"74, ____'74-'75, ____'75-'76, ____'76-'77, ____'77-'78

4. How many Right-to-Read training sessions have you attended?_____

5. Did your school system establish Right-to-Read goals and objectives? ____

    What were some of them? _____

    _____

6. Did your school system provide in-service teacher training? ____YES, ____NO

    In your opinion, was the teacher training

    ____Not at All   ____Somewhat   ____Fairly   ____Very
        Successful   Successful   Successful   Successful

7. Was there an assessment of reading needs made in the classrooms?

                                   ____YES, ____NO, ____Don't KNOW

8. Are students in your school system reading better because of Right to Read?

                                   ____ YES, ____NO? ____Don't KNOW

    Any comments? _____

    _____

9. Has there been any carry over from Right to Read to the content or

    other subject areas? _____

    _____

10. Did your school system receive administrative support?

              ____YES   ____NO   ____DON'T KNOW

11. What was the impact of Right-to-Read at the secondary level? _____

_____

12. What support did your system get from the State? _____

_____

13. Has the State made available good teachers or consultants?

              ____YES   ____NO   ____DON'T KNOW

14. Are there services that the State could be providing that it is not?

Please comment _____

_____

15. On the whole, in your judgement, how successful has the Right to Read

effort been in your locality?

____Not at All   ____Somewhat   ____Fairly   ____ Very
    Successful   Successful   Successful   Successful

16. Is your community still involved in the Right to Read program?

            ____YES,   ____NO

To what extent? _____

17. If your community is no longer involved in Right to Read, why not?

_____

_____

18. Please add any successes or problems you have had with the Right to

Read program.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please return your filled out questionnaire to Vazquez, Nuttall Associates.
Thank you.

GUIDE FOR RIGHT TO READ INTERVIEWS

1. Who initiated Right to Read in your community?

2. What were the stages of development of Right to Read in your system?

3. Needs assessment

    How was your needs assessment done?

    Who was involved in developing, conducting and analyzing the

    needs' assessment?

4. Professional Task Force

    Who were the members of the professional task force?

    How often did you meet?

    What did you work on?

    Was the Task Force involved in the development, conduction, and

    analysis of the needs' assessment?

5. Local Advisory Council

    Who were the members?

    How often did they meet?

    What were the activities of the advisory council?

6. Local Staff Development Program

    What was the content of your local staff development program?

    For whom was it designed?

    How many hours did you meet?

    Was there a link between the results of the needs assessment and

    the staff development program?

7. Conducting of the Local Staff Development Program

    Who were the participants who were involved?

    How many sessions were there?

    What did the program include?

8. Do you have a copy of your system's goals and objectives?

9. In-service training

    What was the duration of the in-service training?

    Who led it?

    What was covered?

10. What kind of testing did your school system use?

11. If 10 is yes -- carry over to the content or subject areas--

    ask them to elaborate.

12. What kind of administrative support did you receive?

    Did your superintendent and school principals advocate for

    the program?

13. What was the impact of Right to Read at the secondary level?

14. What state support have you used?

15. Did the State make resource people available?

    Were resource people used for workshops or on on-going basis?

    What was the reason for requesting a resource person?

16. Are there services that the State could be providing that it is not?

17. Are you still involved in Right to Read?

18. How important to you is the Right to Read network?

19. Does your school system use volunteers?

20. What is going on in your local schools?

21. Has Right to Read worked?

22. If yes, do you have suggestions for improvements?

23. If not, why not?

24. Has Right to Read been valuable for your system?

25. Has Right to Read been worth the time?